

TENTH ANNUAL REPORT

MARYLAND STATE BOARD
OF
MOTION PICTURE CENSORS



1925-1926

OFFICE
211 NORTH CALVERT STREET
BALTIMORE • MARYLAND

Tenth Annual Report

MARYLAND STATE BOARD

of

MOTION PICTURE CENSORS

1925-1926

GEORGE HELLER
Chairman

ASA C. SHARP
Vice Chairman

MARIE WHITE PRESSTMAN
Secretary and Treasurer

HELEN L. ODOM
Chief Clerk

OFFICE

211 NORTH CALVERT STREET
BALTIMORE - MARYLAND

To His Excellency,

HONORABLE ALBERT C. RITCHIE,

Governor of Maryland.

We present herewith the Tenth Annual Report of the Maryland State Board of Censors for the period from October 1, 1925, to September 30, 1926. Details of the number of films examined and the action taken will be found in the report, together with a statement of receipts and disbursements for the fiscal year.

The duties of the Board and the nature of its work need not be entered into here. The Act creating the Board was passed by the General Assembly in 1916. By subsequent legislation the law has been revised and improved, and today state regulation on this important subject is well established in Maryland and accepted alike by the industry itself and the public at large.

We have endeavored to execute faithfully the purposes for which this Board was established, and following the regulations set forth for our guidance we have made such deletions in films submitted as have seemed reasonable and necessary. In rendering decisions the Board has tried to avoid being influenced by personal opinions and has endeavored to perform its duties in a consistent and fair-minded manner, and in such a way as to meet with the approval and support of the public generally. Representatives of the press, social service workers, and persons interested in civic welfare and education have at all times been welcome visitors at the Board's office. All complaints regarding films in which scenes shown were declared objectionable have been carefully followed up, either by recalling the film or by sending an employee to inspect with special reference to the parts objected to. The Board employs four paid inspectors whose duties it is to visit motion picture theatres in all parts of the State.

The office and projection room of the Board are at 211 North Calvert Street, Baltimore. Every film submitted for censorship, duplicates excepted, is examined on the screen. In the case of films of doubtful character, two or more examinations on the screen are made before final action is taken by the

Board. These re-examinations do not appear in the statement attached, but they form a considerable part of the labors of the office.

The purpose of the Board is not to destroy, but to preserve a film by deleting those parts which, in the judgment of the Board, "tend to degrade and corrupt morals and incite to crime." In this way many films which would otherwise be rejected are made to conform to the standards required. Every effort is made to preserve the continuity of the subject matter, and the Board frequently makes suggestions for the construction of films which would otherwise be a total loss in Maryland to their producers.

The percentage of cuts for the past year is smaller than in previous years. Out of a total of 6,482 films submitted, 5,794 were approved, 584 eliminated, and 4 rejected. Three of the rejected subjects were later passed in a reconstructed form. On the whole the Board finds that the number of clean films has been augmented and that the producers are striving to meet the demands of censorship.

In closing the Board recommends that a change be made in the law regulating the charges for duplicates or prints of films censored, by which the original applicant may be allowed a period of three months in which to submit the duplicate prints, instead of requiring that all duplicates be submitted and paid for at the same time as the original. It often works a hardship upon the film exchanges which are unable to disengage all their prints for even the short period of time required for censoring, and they are penalized by the present law which requires that the full censorship fee of \$2.00 per reel be paid for all prints submitted at a later date, instead of \$1.00 as provided for duplicates. This saving to the industry would no doubt result in a small reduction in the amount of fees collected by this office. For the past year the Board turned over to the State treasury the sum of \$7,545.10 in excess of all expenses.

Respectfully submitted,

GEORGE HELLER, *Chairman*

ASA C. SHARP, *Vice Chairman*

MARIE WHITE PRESSTMAN, *Secretary*

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS

REPORT OF FILMS EXAMINED

October 1, 1925—September 30, 1926

	Films Original	Films Duplicate	Reels Original	Reels Duplicate	Films Approved	Films Rejected	Films Eliminated
October	286	291	990	890	523	0	54
November	235	230	792	767	384	0	81
December	289	263	955	729	486	3	63
January	258	260	885	777	454	1	63
February	243	261	817	732	450	0	54
March	273	360	854	1,011	564	0	69
April	245	296	731	765	464	0	77
May	280	282	885	813	508	0	54
June	254	300	706	711	508	0	46
July	232	277	662	716	453	0	56
August	251	311	895	921	528	0	34
September	222	283	647	835	472	0	33
	3,068	3,414	9,819	9,667	5,794	*4	684

*One film finally rejected—Three passed in reconstructed form.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Films, Original	3,068		
Films, Duplicate	3,414		
Reels, Original		9,819	
Reels, Duplicate		9,667	
Films Approved			5,794
Films Rejected			4
Films Eliminated			684
	6,482	19,486	6,482

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS

BUDGET ACCOUNT

STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

For Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 1926

Receipts

Balance, September 30, 1925		\$400.00
State Treasurer, direct	\$22,033.19	
State Treasurer, through Comptroller	629.63	
	<u>22,662.82</u>	
Total		\$23,062.82

Disbursements

Salaries and Wages	\$18,192.60	
General Repairs	19.25	
Light, Heat and Power	288.08	
Traveling Expenses	238.34	
Communication	245.03	
Office Supplies and Stationery	148.74	
Printing	41.75	
Film Approval Seals	650.00	
Motion Picture Machine Supplies	104.70	
Office Equipment	139.70	
Rent	1,950.00	
Insurance	15.00	
	<u>\$22,033.19</u>	
Paid through Comptroller:		
Office Supplies and Stationery, Central		
Purchasing Bureau	\$3.13	
Printing	101.50	
Film Approval Seals	525.00	
	<u>629.63</u>	
Total		22,662.82
Balance, September 30, 1926		\$ 400.00

BANK RECONCILIATION:

Union Trust Company:

Balance, as per Statement September 30, 1926	\$400.00
No Checks Outstanding	

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS

STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

For Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 1926

Receipts

Fees, Original Reels, 9,818, at \$2.00-----	\$19,636.00	
Fees, Duplicate Reels, 9,669, at \$1.00-----	9,669.00	
Substitute Seals, 791, at \$1.00-----	791.00	
Miscellaneous Refunds:		
Traveling Expenses-----	8.87	
Telephone-----	15.55	
Fines-----	50.00	
Marie W. Presstman, Treasurer, Reimbursement from Budget Account-----	37.50	
Total-----		\$30,207.92

Disbursements

Salary, Sadie M. Dorsey-----	\$37.50	
Remitted to State Treasurer-----	30,170.42	\$30,207.92

BANK RECONCILIATION:

Union Trust Company:

Balance, as per Statement September 30, 1926--	\$2,189.00
Check No. 49 Outstanding-----	<u>2,189.00</u>

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS

RECORD OF PROSECUTIONS FOR YEAR 1925-1926

Date	Title of Film	Where Exhibited	Nature of Offense	Imposed Fine
January 17, 1926---	Mary	Canton House, Baltimore	Uncensored Film	\$50.00